

2017-2018 BUDGET QUESTION

Response to Request for Information

DEPARTMENT: Austin Energy

REQUEST NO.: 139

REQUESTED BY: Casar

DATE REQUESTED: 8/24/17

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REQUEST: Does Austin Energy's budget for FY 2018 include an assessment and potential pilot for a no upfront-cost model for providing solar for low-to-middle income customers as called for in the most recent update to the Generation Plan? If not, what is the approximate cost needed to assess such a program? What would be the budgetary impact to establish a utility-managed rooftop solar program that requires no investment from customer participants to deliver direct benefit to low-income customers?

RESPONSE:

Austin Energy's FY 2018 budget does not include an assessment and potential pilot for a no upfront-cost model for providing solar for low-to-middle income customers as called for in the most recent update to the Generation Plan as the plan, adopted on August 17, fell after the submission of the FY 2018 budget. The program assessment and development will require 0.5 FTE, at an estimated cost of \$60,000 (based on all-in cost of 1 project manager position). Program assessment and development will start in FY18, including research on other similar programs and stakeholder engagement, and enable us to provide capital and operational cost estimates of such a program, which could be launched once the capacity-based incentive ramp down is completed and staff are available to implement. The Generation Plan includes direction to "Study and possibly pilot a utility managed rooftop solar program that requires no investment from customer participants." The plan does not reference low-to-middle income customers specifically, and would not be considered "no upfront cost," as the equipment and installation costs will have to be borne, but rather no upfront cost to the host participants. As such, a budget has not been developed to include these costs of this yet-to-be developed program.